

Sheldon Theft
w Boxes

Subj: **Re: Sheldon large cent case and 1794-dated pieces**
 Date: 5/26/2009 2:58:26 P.M. Central Daylight Time
 From: EricNumis
 To: [REDACTED]

Dear Bob:

You certainly sent a prompt answer to my response to your inquiry as to the Sheldon cent matter.

I did not know that Kleeberg is planning to write a book on the subject and am glad you will remind him about the Naftzger settlement provisions. He is now a lawyer and will evaluate the meaning of that text.

As to whether I am a point man for ANS as to Sheldon cent recovery matters I believe my old position as such expired long ago. For many years I do not recall having been in contact with the attorneys who previously represented ANS in this regard except for Xmas or other routine greetings. I will be glad to talk by telephone with to you or anyone at ANS or to Kleeberg to try to clarify anything you feel such conversation or conversations might be helpful.

I fully realize how complicated this is for you not having been at ANS when all this occurred but you were actually just lucky.
 Eric

In a message dated 5/26/2009 2:01:19 P.M. Central Daylight Time, [REDACTED] writes:

Dear Eric,

Thank you very much for your considered reply to my inquiry about the Sheldon Large Cent case. I am delighted that you are still as active as you are with numismatic research and writing, and hope you may be able to come for a visit to NYC, and have a look at the new ANS premises! And I hope you have a wonderfully enjoyable summer, particularly on Martha's Vineyard!

I can certainly understand your reluctance to have to consider going all back through the Sheldon mess, and I really do not wish to burden you in such a manner. Not having been around at the time all that was going on, a lot of it seems a bit mystifying to me. I thank you for your warning about the restrictive provisions of the Naftzger settlement agreement. I was not aware of this, and am glad I first contacted you in this regard. We will find this stipulation, as you suggested, and make sure everyone is aware of what needs to be known. Are you, as I thought, still officially representing the ANS Board as the "point person" for the recovery effort? If so, would you wish to continue?

One would have to assume that "Mr. Bird's" coin is still in that safe deposit box. I guess we will have to find some records pursuant to that aspect of the litigation. I will inquire as to whether Mr. Boka has seen a copy of the ca. 1974 ANS Clapp large cent collection sheets, and advise him to have a look at these if he hasn't. Thank you for the suggestion.

I will ask our excellent archivist, Mr. Ciccone, to help me try to find the pertinent documents relating to the Sheldon thefts of 1794 cents and what became of the various coins, and I will confer with John Kleeberg as to what he knows of the specifics of the case. By the way, he has told me that he is writing a book on the whole Sheldon matter. Presumably he is aware of the provision against releasing settlement agreement information, but I will ask him just to make sure.

Thanks again, Eric, for your willingness to make yourself available for consultation. I hope not to have to bother you to any great extent, and will indeed keep requests to a minimum, but it is always a comfort to know that I can depend on your advice.

All best wishes to you and your family.

Sincerely yours,

Robert W. Hoge
Curator of North American Coins and Currency
American Numismatic Society
75 Varick Street, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10013

212-571-4470 ext. 154
212-571-4452 FAX

On May 22, 2009, at 9:10 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Bob:

I think I am in pretty good shape mentally (I am bragging). I am not as agile physically as I used to be. However I am so lucky to be 98 and still researching and writing. Thank you for your inquiry as to that. I believe we are going to spend some of the summer in Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard.

Bringing up the subject of the Sheldon thefts and the resulting problems and litigation is not a matter that has much appeal to me. Naftzger is gone. A few of the others who caused ANS and me substantial irritation are still around. I have five large containers full of everything I or our foundation obtained or did about the matter for ANS and do not wish to go through any of them if it can be avoided. I have always helped credible numismatic researchers and will continue that practice but will expect others to their part.

The first thing I must warn you and ANS about is that there is a provision in the litigation settlement agreement with Naftzger which prevents ANS or anyone else who knows about the settlement from releasing its provisions with certain exceptions. Please find it and read it so ANS is informed and also its staff and governing personal and their predecessors.

As to the Bird litigation I believe that ANS attorneys and Bird had some reason or contingency to put the coin in a safe deposit box with each of them having a key. I have never learned what happened after that, if anything, who did or did not pay the safe deposit rental or anything. The coin may still there.

Does the researcher for the US 1794 cents project have the mimeographed sheets distributed by ANS about 1974 attempting to list a detailed description and provenance of all of the early US cents in the ANS holdings, some of which sheets state that the coin is not the Clapp piece?

John Kleeberg probably knows as much or more than I do about all the above. My feelings will not be hurt if ANS asks anyone else for information about the matter.

You may telephone me on the matter at any time. My number is 314 727 0850. Please try to keep any further work you may request from me to a minimum.

My best to you. Keep numismatics hopping.
Eric

In a message dated 5/19/2009 10:52:29 A.M. Central Daylight Time,
 [REDACTED] writes:

Dear Eric,

Greetings from NYC! It has been some time since I have seen you, or been in contact. I hope you are well, and that you will be able to come and visit the new ANS headquarters facilities one of these days. I'm hoping, too, that you may be able to help me with some more data about the infamous Sheldon thefts large cent situation.

I have received a request from EAC member Al Boka for definitive information about the 1794-dated large cents in the ANS cabinet. He is compiling a book of the pedigrees of as many 1794s as he can locate, and seeks a listing of those which were stolen, which have been returned, which are still outstanding and a recap of the substituted 1794s: which have been released, which still remain in custody, etc. I believe I can work out most of these details, but I am unsure of the current status of the coins that are still missing.

Are we, for instance, still offering to compensate those who return missing coins, or to give them "switched in" coins in return for the stolen pieces? Don't you make these decisions based upon individual circumstances, or have some already been agreed upon? For instance, are you familiar with the situation involving the dealer Doug Bird, who has at least one of the missing coins (?S.63, ANS 1946.142.173), and has been saying for some years that he is going to return it to us, apparently anticipating an exchange. I believe there was a court case in this matter. Is he supposed to be working this kind of thing out through you, according to the ANS Board's wishes?

I am unclear on the actual provenance of the coins that Sheldon switched into the ANS cabinet when he took the Clapp coins. Do you know if these were established? Would Del Bland know this sort of thing?

Evidently a number of the ANS' coins were selected out of the collection -- not necessarily just the "switched-in" coins -- to be given to Mr. Naftzger when he was required to return some of the pieces stolen by Dr. Sheldon in the court settlement. Do you know if he was "compensated" in this way for the coins that he did not return, but for which he repaid to the ANS a value awarded by the court? The whole situation seems rather confusing to me, and I'm hoping you can enlighten me.

Sorry to trouble you like this, Eric. I hope my concerns will not be burdensome. Thanks for any thoughts you may have.

Sincerely yours,

Bob

Robert W. Hoge
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Subj: **18th century mint edge marking**
Date: 9/2/2011 6:08:34 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric,

Thanks for your call. Glad that you came through Irene unscathed! It is always a pleasure to hear from you and to chat.

I have been looking into your inquiry, and hope I may be able to assist. I think, if I am not mistaken, that the reference to which you alluded is the bound manuscript *An essay on coining*, by Samuel Thompson, evidently prepared in 1783 (not 1781), having 56 pages and plates. The pertinent section reveals that Thompson does indeed specifically state that the edge markings are applied after the coins have been struck, and in the watercolor plate demonstrating the application of the edge devices by means of the Chastaing machine, he even shows the images of oversized coins as already bearing their obverse and reverse designs. (This is of course contrary to what one might suppose from examination of the coins themselves.) Thompson was referring to the current practices of the Royal mint. Elizabeth Hahn wrote about this work in the last issue of the *ANS Magazine*, the number for which I prepared the article on some of your literary accomplishments in numismatics.

I will give this further study when I am back in the office next week, and will attempt to get and send to you scans of the Thompson ms. There was apparently a copy of this in the Edward Barnsley papers.

Here's wishing you and your family a very happy Labor Day weekend,

Bob

Robert Wilson Hoge
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copy sent to Susan

line 9 after inside put in of
line 10 replace with with within

You have been very patient with me and I hope you and your wife will forgive me when you are sitting on the beach in the islands while I am slipping on the sleet. I was never before put in such a time frame to finish. Time flies. If you can send me a corrected copy of these changes by Internet reindeer I think that will be worthwhile. Telephone me if desirable. Tell your printer that her reputation will be finessed or restruck if she puts out a book without proper corrections. Greetings Eric

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